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Saffron Walden
THE RURAL DISTRICT
OF SAFFRON WALDEN
in the
Administrative County of Essex

THE
**ANNUAL
REPORT**
of the
Medical Officer of Health
and the
Senior Sanitary Inspector
for the year
1955

Irene M. Conway Hastilow,
M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.C.H., D.Obst.R.C.O.G., M.R.S.H.
Medical Officer of Health, Saffron Walden Rural District Council;
Medical Officer of Health, Saffron Walden Corporation;
Assistant County Medical Officer of Health, Essex County Council;
School Medical Officer, Essex County Council.

A. Armes, M.R.S.H., M.S.I.A.
Senior Sanitary Inspector, Saffron Walden Rural District Council.



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PREFACE

Public Health Department,
69 High Street,
Saffron Walden, Essex.

To The Chairman and Members of the Saffron Walden Rural District Council.

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my sixth Annual Report.

The Vital Statistics for the district continued to be satisfactory and once again no deaths occurred from diphtheria, whooping cough or measles. Nine cases of tuberculosis were notified during the year compared with ten notified in 1954 and sixteen notified in 1953, and no deaths occurred from this disease during 1955.

Two cases of poliomyelitis occurred during the year (one paralytic and one non-paralytic).

On the whole 1955 was another healthy year, the marked increase in the number of cases of measles being the usual biennial rise following the low incidence in 1954.

The problem of old people living alone is becoming more acute as the percentage of old persons increases in the population and it was with great pleasure that we welcomed the formation of an Old People's Welfare Association for Saffron Walden and District. This Association aims at supplementing the excellent work already being carried out in this area by existing voluntary organizations.

Another recently formed society, which is doing very good work under most difficult circumstances, is the Saffron Walden, Dunmow and District Society for Mentally Handicapped Children. This little Society, although entirely without funds except for money raised by its own voluntary efforts, has managed to maintain an Occupation Centre which, although only open at fortnightly intervals, gives much pleasure to the mentally handicapped children in the neighbourhood and to their parents. There is no doubt that such societies, by helping to relieve stress and anxiety, play a most important role in improving the health of the community.

The Saffron Walden and District Tuberculosis Care Association has continued to give invaluable help to tubercular patients and their families, thus contributing to the limitation and cure of this disease.

In conclusion I wish to thank the members of the Council, and particularly the Health Committee, for the encouragement given me during the year, and the officials for their help and co-operation. My thanks are due particularly to the Senior Sanitary Inspector and his staff for their really splendid response to every emergency, and to my secretary, Miss Lamb, and the Essex County Council Welfare Foods/Clinic Clerks, Mrs Ledgerton and Mrs Sharp, for most loyal and able assistance.

I am, Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

I. MARY CONWAY HASTILOW

Medical Officer of Health

September, 1956.

Mr. A. L. Barton
Mr. A. Edge

Mr. A. F. Kemp
Mr. F. O. Renshaw

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SAFFRON WALDEN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

(as on 31st December, 1955)

Chairman: Mr D. G. Gold

Vice-Chairman: Mrs M. J. Leonard

Mrs E. R. Anderson
Miss M. Baker
Mr J. D. Barnard
Mr S. S. Barnard
Mr J. H. W. Burleigh
Colonel J. Bury
Brig. T. F. J. Collins
Mr W. Davey
Mr B. E. Erith
Mrs H. B. Forman
Mr J. A. Fitzgerald
Mrs E. F. Fraser
Mr A. George
Mr B. Goodwin
Mr W. H. Hamilton
Mr W. G. Hardy
Mr P. D. Harrison
Mr W. Harvey
Mr A. P. Holton
Mr W. L. Kent

Mr A. D. King
Mrs M. J. Lindsell
Mr J. A. Littlewood
Mr W. E. Mayhew
Mrs J. M. D. Muir
Mr G. T. Nunn
Mr G. B. Parker
Mr J. Pimblett
Mr J. S. Plumb
Mr S. J. Rowland
Mr R. Smith
Vice-Admiral Sir G. O.
Stephenson
Colonel W. A. Stewart
Mr A. W. Swan
Mr W. G. C. Tomalin
Mr D. A. W. Thesiger
Mr P. H. Wiseman
Mr C. Wright

Public Health Staff of the Authority

Medical Officer of Health:

Irene M. Conway Hastilow, M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
D.P.H., D.C.H., D.Obst.R.C.O.G., M.R.S.H.

Secretary:

Miss A. M. Lamb. (Appointed, July, 1955).

Senior Sanitary Inspector:

A. Armes, M.R.S.H., M.S.I.A., Meat & Food Inspectors' Certificate.

Additional Sanitary Inspector:

G. E. Hawthorn, M.S.I.A.

Assistant Sanitary Inspector:

P. Reed. (Appointed, March, 1955).

Technical Assistant:

R. Skoyles.

Sanitary Inspector's Secretary:

Mrs J. Muggridge. (Resigned 30.9.55).
Miss B. Bishop. (Appointed 10.10.55).

SECTION A.—STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT

Area: 78,585 acres.

Population (Registrar General's Estimate mid-year, 1955): 18,450.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1955) according to Rate Books:
5,934.

Rateable value: £83,313.

Product of Penny Rate—Year ended 31/3/55: £338. 10s. 7d.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR

					Total	Male	Female
Live Births	Legitimate	...	...	...	230	112	118
	Illegitimate	...	...	...	12	4	8
Still Births	Legitimate	...	...	...	3	1	2
	Illegitimate	...	...	...	1	1	—
Deaths from all causes					179	97	82
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population:					12.4		
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population:					9.7		

DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES

Cause of Death:	1955		1954	
	M.	F.	M.	F.
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory	0	0	2	0
2. Tuberculosis, other	0	0	0	0
3. Syphilitic disease	1	0	0	0
4. Diphtheria	0	0	0	0
5. Whooping Cough	0	0	0	0
6. Meningococcal infections	0	1	0	0
7. Acute poliomyelitis	0	0	0	0
8. Measles	0	0	0	0
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	0	0	0	0
10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach	5	4	3	0
11. Malignant neoplasm, lung bronchus	4	0	4	0
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast	0	1	0	2
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus	0	1	0	2
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ...	9	12	8	9
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	0	0	1	0
16. Diabetes	0	1	0	1
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system	17	18	13	8
18. Coronary disease, angina	16	10	27	14
19. Hypertension with heart disease	2	2	1	3
20. Other heart disease	8	11	15	15
21. Other circulatory disease	1	5	7	10
22. Influenza	1	0	0	1
23. Pneumonia	2	0	2	5
24. Bronchitis	3	3	5	1

25. Other diseases of respiratory system	2	1	0	1
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	2	1	2	2
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	1	0	1	0
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	0	0	1	1
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	1	0	2	0
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	1	0	0
31. Congenital malformations	4	1	2	0
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	10	8	13	7
33. Motor Vehicle accidents	1	1	2	0
34. All other accidents	4	0	0	1
35. Suicide	3	0	3	0
36. Homicide and Operations of War	0	0	0	0

Deaths from puerperal causes:—

From puerperal sepsis	0
From other puerperal causes	1
Total	1

Deaths of infants under one year of age:—

Legitimate	6	2
Illegitimate	0	0
Total	6	2 = 8

Deaths of infants under four weeks of age:—

Legitimate	6	1
Illegitimate	0	0
Total	6	1 = 7

Death rate of infants under one year per 1,000 live births: 33.06

There was no excessive mortality from any particular disease during the year.

Diphtheria: No cases of diphtheria occurred during the year.

Food Poisoning: No cases of food poisoning occurred during the year.

Poliomyelitis: One case of Poliomyelitis (Paralytic) and one case (Non-paralytic) occurred during the year.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Notifiable Disease (other than tuberculosis)

	1955	1954
Whooping Cough	6	61
Scarlet Fever	9	6
Erysipelas	2	1
Pneumonia	12	24
Measles	259	98
Infective Hepatitis	4	4
Diphtheria	0	1
Food Poisoning	0	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	0	2
Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	1	0
(Non-Paralytic)	1	0

TUBERCULOSIS

Notifications: Nine cases of tuberculosis were notified during 1955 (five pulmonary and four non-pulmonary). (In 1954, ten cases of tuberculosis were notified—seven pulmonary and three non-pulmonary).

Deaths: There were no deaths from tuberculosis notified during 1955, compared with two deaths in 1954.

SECTION B.—GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE DISTRICT

Laboratory Service—Bacteriological Service. The District is served by the Public Health Laboratory, Tennis Court Road, Cambridge.

Ambulance Facilities—A day and night ambulance service is provided by Essex County Council. The Ambulance Station is at Saffron Walden and is on the telephone, but as the driver and attendant may be away from the station answering a call, persons requiring an ambulance are advised to dial “999” and ask for an ambulance. Where there is no dialling system it is sufficient to lift the receiver and ask for an ambulance.

Non-emergency calls are only accepted from a hospital, a doctor or nurse, or other competent person, such as a duly authorised officer in the Mental Health Service.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Home Nursing and Domiciliary Midwifery: These services are carried out by the Home Nurse/Midwives resident in the area.

Domiciliary Visiting by Health Visitors: There are four Health Visitors working in the Rural District.

Domestic Help Services: Applications for domestic help should be made to the Area Medical Officer, Mid-Essex Area, 75 Springfield Road, Chelmsford.

Care of Expectant Mothers: An Ante-Natal Clinic is held at 2 p.m. on the 1st Tuesday afternoon of the month at 69 High Street, Saffron Walden.

Care of Children up to School Age: Child Welfare Sessions are held at Newport, Debden, Ashdon and Stansted, as well as at Saffron Walden. Children are immunised against diphtheria and whooping cough at all clinics on request. Vaccinations are not carried out at the clinics as a routine, but are performed by the family doctor.

Care of School Children: Regular School Medical Inspections are carried out at all schools. Children are immunised against diphtheria and whooping cough with the consent of the parents.

Dental Service: Treatment is given at 69 High Street, Saffron Walden, and inspections and treatments carried out at the schools.

Hospitals: The hospitals are managed by the Regional Hospital Boards and provide medical, surgical and special treatment. The hospitals which serve the population of the Saffron Walden Rural District are those in Saffron Walden, Cambridge and Bishop's Stortford. Cases of infectious disease requiring hospital care are admitted to Infectious Diseases Hospitals at Cambridge, Newmarket and Bishop's Stortford.

Chest Clinics are available for the population of the Saffron Walden Rural District. There is one at Saffron Walden General Hospital, one at Castle Hill, Cambridge, and one at Haymeads Hospital, Bishop's Stortford.

Treatment of Venereal Diseases is provided at the Clinics at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, and at Haymeads Hospital, Bishop's Stortford.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948, SECTION 47

It was not necessary to take Statutory Action under this Section during 1955.

SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA HOUSING

Seventy-two Council houses were completed during the year and the number of dwellings erected by private enterprise totalled twenty-four.

The small sewage disposal units now provided to practically every large Council house estate have successfully overcome the problems created in the past.

The careful investigations carried out into the housing and medical circumstances of applicants for houses ensured that the Tenancy Committee had all relevant information before them when allocating tenancies.

In accordance with the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, the Council's programme for future "Slum Clearance" was prepared and submitted to the Minister.

WATER

I am indebted to the Council's Engineer and Surveyor (Mr J. S. Y. Molineux), who is responsible for the maintenance of main water supplies, for the following report:—

I am pleased to say that the quantity and quality of water available in the area continued to be satisfactory, although there has been an increase in overall consumption of $22\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons for the year. This brings the average consumption per head per day to approximately 30 gallons.

SEWERAGE

The various sewage disposal works in the District continue to operate satisfactorily, with the exception of Stansted and Rickling and Quendon, which are both obsolete. Schemes for new works for both of these have been prepared by the Council's Consulting Engineers.

During the year a sewer and small sewage disposal works for Farnham, and for the housing sites at Wimbish and Wendens Ambo, have been completed.

TYPICAL RESULTS OF CHEMICAL ANALYSES OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES

(in parts per million)

TEST FOR	SOURCE						
	Hempstead Works	Wenden Works	Henham Works	Newport Works	Linton Works	Stansted Works	Rochfords Works
Appearance	Bright	Bright	Bright	Bright	Bright	Bright	Bright
Colour	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Turbidity	Nil	Less than 3	Less than 3	Less than 3	Nil	Less than 3	Less than 3
Odour	Faint	Faint	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
pH	Chlorinous	Chlorinous	7.1	6.9	7.2	7.0	7.0
Free CO ₂	7.1	30	30	49	20	36	40
Elect. Conductivity	32	520	520	590	500	560	610
Total Solids	540	350	350	395	335	375	410
Cl. as Chloride	360	13	15	23	16	18	22
Alkalinity (Ca. CO ₃)	17	260	265	270	225	255	275
Hardness (Total)	275	300	320	330	270	310	335
Hardness (Carbonate)	275	260	265	270	225	255	275
Hardness (Non-Carbonate)	35	40	55	60	45	55	60
Nitrate Nitrogen	3.0	4.0	0.0	7.2	6.4	4.4	4.4
Nitrite Nitrogen	Absent	Absent	Less than 0.01	Less than 0.01	Less than 0.01	Absent	Absent
Ammoniacal Nitrogen	0.000	0.000	0.023	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Albuminoid Nitrogen	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Oxygen Absorbed	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.20	0.05	0.20	0.15
Residual Chlorine	0.05	0.14	Absent	Absent	Absent	...	...
Metals	Absent	Absent	Iron—0.18; other metals absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent

Bacteriological Examinations: All supplies were sampled regularly for bacteriological examination and where reports proved unsatisfactory immediate action was taken.

CIRCULARS, etc., RECEIVED DURING THE YEAR 1955

Ministry of Health Circular.	Venereal Diseases Educational Campaign.
Ministry of Food Circular 3/55.	Milk & Dairies Regulations, 1949 to 1954. Approved Oxidising and Preserving Agents.
Ministry of Food Circular 5/55. Statutory Instrument No. 917.	The Slaughter of Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) Amendment Regulations 1955.
Ministry of Health (55) 28 National Health Service.	Nursing Techniques Memorandum, National Health Service.
Ministry of Food Circular 6/55. Statutory Instrument 1955 No. 959.	Transfer of Functions (Food & Drugs) Order, 1955.
Ministry of Food Circular 7/55.	Public Health (Imported Food) Regulations, 1937 & 1948, Portugal Official Certificate.
Home Office 7/55 and Memorandum.	Training of Members of Civil Defence Corps.
Ministry of Food 10/55.	Milk & Dairies Regulations, 1949 to 1954. Approved Oxidising and Preserving Agents.
Ministry of Health.	Circular letter. Unsatisfactory samples of Chinese Egg Albumen.
Ministry of Health (54) 118.	Sterilization of Hospital Equipment.
Ministry of Health Circular 17/55.	Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health for 1955.
Statutory Instrument 1955 No. 1898 (C.18).	Food and Drugs Amendment Act, 1954 (Ap- pointed Day) Order, 1955.
Statutory Instrument 1955 No. 1906.	Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955.
Ministry of Food 13/55.	Food & Drugs Act, 1955.
Ministry of Food 14/55.	Food & Drugs Act, 1955.
Ministry of Health (55) 35.	The Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1952. Notifications by Hospitals to Medical Officer of Health.
Ministry of Food 19/55.	The Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955.

REPORT OF THE SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR 1955

PREFACE

To the Chairman and Members of the Saffron Walden Rural District Council.

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my tenth Annual Report indicating as briefly as possible the duties performed by my Department during the year.

Once again the emphasis during the period has been on housing, and it is interesting to note that, whilst ten years ago the drive to erect new Council dwellings took precedence, the present tendency is to encourage and assist owners to provide **their** tenants with the modern amenities enjoyed by Council tenants. The steady stream of enquiries and applications for Improvement Grants has, at times, almost monopolised the Department's time, but the results achieved have perhaps justified the diminution in work in other fields. There is little doubt that the major repairs and improvement works now proceeding will influence the future programme of slum clearance envisaged in the return which was submitted to the Minister during the year.

Although some progress in preparing for the provision of sewerage schemes has been made, it is to be hoped that the provision of this essential amenity will be expedited for the larger and more congested villages.

In the meantime, I am sure that the smaller parishes would welcome parity with their larger neighbours in the matter of the frequency of removal of household refuse.

The manifold and sometimes difficult duties are lightened by the confidence and support of the Council, the loyalty and assistance of my staff, and the outstanding co-operation between the Council's Chief Officers fostered by the Clerk of the Council.

I have the honour to be,

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

A. ARMES,

Senior Sanitary Inspector

SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1955

Inspections carried out by the Department during the year totalled 3,468 and the details below indicate the multifarious nature of these visits:—

Inspections under the Housing Acts (Repairs, overcrowding, Improvement Grants, etc.)	791
Investigations and re-inspections regarding Council House applications	827
Inspections of Council Houses regarding cleanliness, management, lodgers, etc.	167
Inspections in connection with Public Health Nuisances	214
Visits in connection with Infectious Diseases	95
Visits in connection with Rodent Destruction (not including Operator's Visits)	77
Inspections of Dairies	44
Inspections of Food shops, Restaurants, Canteens, Licensed Premises, etc.	44
Inspections of Factories including Bakehouses	21
Inspections of Ice Cream Premises	185
Inspections regarding proposed new drainage	219
Inspections in connection with defective drainage	160
Visits in connection with Refuse and Night Soil Collection and Salvage	138
Inspections in connection with water supplies other than main supplies	23
Number of water samples collected from main supplies	292
Inspections in connection with Moveable Dwellings	18
Miscellaneous Visits	153

HOUSING

(a) Council Houses:—

The Department continued to be responsible for providing reports on the housing circumstances of applicants for housing accommodation. This information is made use of both by the Tenancy Committee in selecting tenants, and by the Committee responsible for planning the number and types of houses to be erected.

New building during 1955 was as follows:—

Number of Council houses completed	72
Number of Council houses under construction at 31.12.55.	16
Number of private houses completed	24
Number of private houses under construction at 31.12.55.	33

In order to make the fullest use of Council houses, the policy of transferring families by agreement to houses more suited to their needs was continued; wherever possible exchanges between the Council's tenants and those of other local authorities were agreed to.

A report upon the position of housing applicants at December, 1955, was as follows:—

Total number of applications	704
“Non-priority” cases	587
“Priority” cases (i.e. overcrowded families, “Bedroom deficiency”, sharing houses, bad housing conditions, medical priorities, etc.)	117
Number of houses under construction or approved	69

Selection of tenants by the Tenancy Committee was based upon reports presented on each applicant's circumstances. 89 families were re-housed during the year on the following grounds:—

Sharing houses	33
Overcrowded or with “Bedroom deficiency”	14
Re-housed from Requisitioned properties	2
Bad housing conditions	20
Transfers from existing Council houses	7
Miscellaneous (Agricultural need, aged persons, medical grounds, etc.)	13

Inspections of Council properties are carried out to detect cases of wilful damage, uncleanliness, etc. Of 55 houses inspected in only 6 cases was action deemed necessary; the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was consulted on 2 families resulting in a successful prosecution against one tenant who eventually removed to another area.

Council tenants are required to obtain permission before housing lodgers, and circumstances are ascertained before approval is granted.

By the end of the year all occupiers of Requisitioned properties had been re-housed, and all the dwellings released to the owners.

(b) Overcrowding:—

The following table summarises the position respecting Overcrowding existing in the District:—

SUMMARY OF OVERCROWDING AND ABATEMENT

	"Borderline" (Permitted No. =Number of persons)	Houses where No. of "persons" exceeded the permitted number by:—								Totals	
		½ person	1 person	1½ persons	2 persons	3 persons	3½ persons	4 persons	4½ persons	Borderline	Overcrowded
Cases on Register at 31.12.54	11	5	5	—	3	1	—	—	1	11	15
Ascertained during 1955	5	3	3	5	1	1	—	—	—	5	13
Cases abated during 1955 by removal to Council Houses	4	2	6	1	1	—	—	—	—	4	10
Cases otherwise abated during 1955	10	5	1	4	2	1	—	—	1	10	14
Number of cases on Register at 31.12.55.	2	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	4

(c) Action taken under the Housing Acts (Repair, Demolition, etc.)

In accordance with Section 1 of the Housing, Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, the following proposals were submitted to the Minister of Housing and Local Government, the figure being based upon an outline survey of houses in the District. The proposals may, of course, have to be modified from time to time:—

Total number of permanent dwellings in the local authority's area 5,935

Part 1. The total problem

- (i) Estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation within the meaning of section 9 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, and suitable for action under section 11 or section 25 of the Housing Act, 1936 297
- (ii) Period of years which the Council think necessary for securing the demolition of all the houses in (i) 10 yrs

Part 2. Orders already made, etc.

(iii) Number of houses in (i) in clearance areas and already covered by operative clearance or compulsory purchase orders or owned by the local authority	33
(iv) Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory orders have been submitted to the Minister but have not yet become operative	Nil

Part 3. Action in the first five years

(v) Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory purchases orders are to be made or which are to be purchased by agreement within the five years	Nil
(vi) Number of houses which are to be included in clearance areas still to be declared and which within the five years will be owned by the local authority or will have been included in a clearance order or a compulsory purchase order submitted to the Minister	40
(vii) Number of houses under (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) to be patched (if necessary) and retained within the five years under section 2 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, for temporary accommodation	Nil
(viii) Number of houses under (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) to be demolished in the five years	73
(ix) Number of houses (including those already comprised in operative demolition orders) to be demolished in the five years as a result of action under section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936	50

All dwellings from which tenants were re-housed by the Council were inspected and referred to the responsible Committee, and similar action was taken in respect of other sub-standard properties found during routine inspection.

Action taken during the year was as follows:—

Number of houses inspected for housing defects	102
Number of Informal Repair Notices issued	56
Number of houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action	35
Number of Statutory Repair Notices issued (Section 9)	1
Number of houses rendered fit by owners after service of Statutory Notices	4
Number of Demolition Orders issued	1
Number of houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	3

Number of Demolition Orders revoked (Section 5, Housing Act, 1954)	1
Number of Undertakings accepted from owners (Section 11)	4
Number of dwellings rendered fit after acceptance of Undertakings	3
Houses forming part of confirmed Clearance Areas where work carried out was considered to be "tantamount to demolition and rebuilding"	7

(Note:—In a number of cases owners were encouraged to carry out improvements with the aid of Improvement Grants, but such properties are not included in the above figures).

Two applications were received from tenants for Certificates of Disrepair in accordance with the Housing, Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, and in each case a Certificate was issued.

(d) Improvement Grants:—

The Council continued to encourage property owners to apply for Grants towards the cost of improving dwellings, which are available under the Housing Act, 1949, as amended by the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954.

160 properties were inspected in detail so that schedules of repairs and improvements required could be submitted to owners.

Progress made during the year is indicated as follows:—

Number of Grants approved by the Council during 1955 ...	58
Total "approved expenses" of improvement works in approved schemes	£29,872
Total sum of Grants approved	£14,440
Number of schemes completed during 1955	28

The work involved in surveying properties, interviewing owners and architects, examining plans and specifications, and inspecting works in progress, represented a large proportion of the Department's activities, but the resultant improvement in standards of housing undoubtedly justified the efforts involved.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS

Seven applications for Development Permission under the Town & Country Planning Acts were referred to the Department for investigation, and in the six approved cases, licences under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, were issued, endorsed with conditions regarding sanitary conveniences, water supply, disposal of waste water and refuse removal.

At the end of the year there were in force twenty-two licences in respect of separate moveable dwellings, and three licences covering sites for numbers of such habitations.

WATER SUPPLIES

Sampling was continued at approximately fortnightly intervals from headworks and from various points on the lines of supply. Bacteriological examination of the samples at the Public Health Laboratory, Cambridge, gave the following results:—

Supply	No. of samples submitted for Bacteriological Examination	Number complying with standard	Number found not to comply with standard
Rochfords, Birchanger	56	32	24
Stansted Water Co.	41	40	1
Southern Area (Henham Works)	42	42	—
Central Area (Newport Works)	35	34	1
Western Area (Wenden Works)	50	50	—
Eastern Area (Hempstead Works)	49	49	—
Hadstock (South Cambs. R.D.C.)	19	19	—
Totals	292	266	26

Only five cottages at Rochfords Nurseries are now supplied from their private bore.

All public supplies are chlorinated; no further complaints regarding supplies from “dead end” mains in the Henham supply area have been received since the installation of the Aeration Plant in 1954.

Samples were submitted from each source of supply for chemical analysis and the laboratory reports indicated that the waters were all highly satisfactory.

Practically the whole District is served by main supplies, and few dwellings derive their water from private wells.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE

Investigations were carried out in respect of 208 plans submitted for Building Byelaw approval showing drainage proposals and recommendations were forwarded to the Plans Committee.

Where sewers are not available owners were encouraged to install a standard type septic tank discharging effluent into the subsoil. Little trouble was experienced from these installations and pollution of ditches and ponds is avoided.

Sewage disposal plants to serve the Council housing estates at Wendens Ambo, Farnham and Wimbish were constructed and are now in operation; the majority of Council house sites are now satisfactorily

provided with such plants which are maintained by mobile labour under the supervision of the Council's Engineer and Surveyor.

Little progress can be reported regarding the proposed scheme for sewerage the parish of Great Chesterford. It is to be hoped that this project, and similar schemes for the parishes of Ashdon, Littlebury and Manuden will not be indefinitely delayed.

The Consulting Engineer's proposals for new sewerage works at Stansted (estimated cost £45,000) were forwarded to the County Council for approval.

During the year 41 informal notices regarding defective drainage were issued in respect of 44 properties; 31 notices had been complied with by the end of the year.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

Refuse collection is carried out by contract, two 10 cubic yard side-loading vehicles being used. Fortnightly collection takes place in the parishes of Stansted, Newport, Great Chesterford and Littlebury, the remaining villages receiving monthly service.

"Back door" collection is provided and such complaints as arise are mainly due to the difficulties encountered by householders in storing four or five weeks refuse. It is fairly certain that the majority of ratepayers would willingly meet a slightly higher rate demand in exchange for a scavenging service more akin to present day standards.

Refuse collection is dealt with by semi-controlled tipping at four large pits rented by the Council.

Waste paper is baled at Newport and Stansted, and despatched to Thames Board Mills Ltd., with whom the Council have a contract. The income derived from the sale of salvaged material is stated below, figures in respect of the previous year being given for comparison:

				1954			1955		
				T. C. Q.			T. C. Q.		
Waste Paper	...	...	...	89	14	1	101	2	0
Rags	...	...	...	2	2	3	2	4	3
Metals	...	...	...	5	11	3	1	3	1
Total Income				£744. 7s. 3d.			£891. 0s. 0d.		

Weekly emptying of pail closets is carried out by contractor in the parishes of Great Chesterford and Littlebury.

The remaining parishes are covered by a private collection scheme, sponsored by the Council, whereby occupiers pay the contractor direct; 203 householders now take advantage of this arrangement.

INSPECTION OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES

(a) Milk

In connection with the duties of local authorities regarding enforcement of the Milk and Dairies Regulations at dairies not registered as dairy farms, regular inspection is carried out and samples taken at intervals.

Number of Registered Dairy Premises	10
Number of Registered Distributors of Milk	11
Dealers Licences issued for Tuberculin Tested Milk	10
Dealers Licences issued for Pasteurised Milk	10
Dealers Licences issued for Sterilised Milk	2
*Supplementary Licences—Tuberculin Tested Milk	8
Supplementary Licences—Pasteurised Milk	8
Supplementary Licences—Sterilised Milk	4

(* Supplementary Licences are issued in respect of sale of milk from premises situated outside the District).

Sampling Results:—

Designation	Samples taken	Number satisfactory	Number unsatisfactory
Tuberculin Tested	5	4	1
Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised)	22	22	—
Pasteurised	28	28	—
Sterilised	4	4	—
Ungraded	3	3	—

Routine sampling of milk supplies for biological examination (for the presence of tubercle bacilli or brucella abortus) is not carried out as this duty is performed by the Essex County Council. No positive results were notified by the latter Authority, and no action was necessary under Section 20 of the Milk and Dairies Regulations (compulsory diversion of milk supplies for heat treatment).

(b) Ice Cream

Fifty vendors are registered under the Essex County Council Act, 1933, for sale and storage of ice cream, nearly all of which is sold as obtained, pre-wrapped, from the manufacturers. Samples are collected at regular intervals and submitted immediately to Cambridge laboratory; storage temperatures are also checked to ensure that the maximum temperature (28°F) is not exceeded.

Total number of samples submitted for examination	144
Samples in Provisional Grade I	96
Samples in Provisional Grade II	28
Samples in Provisional Grade III	11
Samples in Provisional Grade IV	9

(c) Slaughterhouses and Meat Inspection

During the year all meat retailed in the area was purchased "off the hook" from wholesale suppliers, or slaughtered in premises outside the District.

Owners of four slaughterhouses intimated that they might wish to resume the use of their premises. A schedule of necessary works was, therefore, prepared in respect of each building with a promise that when the works were completed, licences for the maximum period would be granted.

164 carcasses of pork landed at Stansted Airport were inspected and passed as sound.

(d) Other Foods

The following foodstuffs were examined by request at retailers premises and surrendered as unsound and unfit for human consumption:

- 61 (4 lb size) bottled fruit.
- 119 tins miscellaneous canned foods.
- 16 tins (total 175 lbs) cooked ham.
- 116 lbs carcase meat.

(e) Food premises, cafés, restaurants, etc.

The number of such premises in the District at 31.12.55 was as follows:—

Butchers shops	8
General stores (grocery and provisions)	65
Licensed premises	87
Bakehouses	12
Sweet shops	7
Greengrocers	2
Fishmongers	1
Premises Registered under Section 14 Food and Drugs Act... ..	6
Cafés and Restaurants	11
School Canteens, etc.	22

Forty-four visits to these premises were made, and attention drawn to unsatisfactory conditions or practices. It would seem that the continued publicity regarding hygienic food handling and repeated visits and advice through lectures, etc., is slowly having effect on the attitude both of food handlers and the public.

Informal action was, however, necessary in several cases; one café was closed by the proprietor following such action, and another was completely refitted and redecorated throughout.

Modern sanitary accommodation was provided at two licensed premises, and similar works at two other public houses were in hand by the end of the year.

No outbreaks of food poisoning were reported.

RODENT CONTROL

The work of rat and mice destruction was carried out by a part-time operator.

Occupiers of dwelling houses are charged in accordance with a scale based on rateable value, the whole cost of treating business premises being recovered.

Work carried out under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, during the year ended 31st March, 1956, is indicated below:—

	Type of Property				
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agricultural	All other including Business Premises	Total
Premises inspected as a result of notification	—	33	—	10	43
Premises inspected as a result of survey under the Act	18	30	5	5	58
Number of properties found to be infested with rats:—					
Major infestations	—	—	—	—	—
Minor infestations	16	49	2	12	79
Number of properties found to be seriously infested with mice:—					
Minor infestations	—	1	—	—	1
Number of infested premises treated by the Council's operator	16	30	—	10	56

(Reinspections and repeat treatments are not included in these figures).

Test baiting of sewers at Newport and Stansted was carried out but these proved negative, and treatment was, therefore, unnecessary.

All refuse tips were treated at regular intervals, and infestation at these was kept at a very low level.

INSPECTIONS OF FACTORIES

Particulars of premises registered under the Factories Act, 1937, inspections made and action taken are as follows:—

1. INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health:

PREMISES	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	3	3	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	52	16	2	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	7	3	1	—
Total	62	21	3	—

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found:—

PARTICULARS	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	Referred by H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temp. (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7):					
(a) insufficient	2	2	—	1	—
(b) unsuitable or defective	1	1	—	1	—
(c) not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including offences relating to out-workers)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	3	3	—	2	—

GENERAL MATTERS

The following miscellaneous matters were also dealt with during the year:—

Nuisances from accumulations of refuse	3
Dwelling houses in filthy condition	2
Nuisances from night soil disposal	3
Nuisances from pig and poultry keeping	3
Smoke nuisance from industrial premises	1
Premises disinfested for fly infestations	1
Premises disinfested for bed bug infestations	1
Premises disinfested for flea infestations	5
Premises disinfested for infestation by other insects	3
Council houses treated with residual D.D.T. or Gammexane before occupation	73
Number of cases of infectious diseases investigated	25
Visits to contacts of Poliomyelitis	30
Terminal disinfestations carried out	12
Bedding steam disinfected	3

Three cases of aged people living alone under unsatisfactory conditions were referred to the Department. With the co-operation of the medical practitioners concerned and the responsible officers of the Essex County Council, it was possible to arrange for two such persons to be admitted to suitable hospitals; the third case is being visited regularly.

Reports on 271 properties were supplied in connection with Requisitions for Searches under the Land Charges Act.

A. ARMES,
Senior Sanitary Inspector

12th September, 1956.



